

**Abstract**

The invention relates to a method for protecting at least one motor vehicle component against manipulation in a control device, which comprises at least one microcomputer ( $\mu$ C) and at least one memory module (2, 3), characterized in that the code which is necessary for operation of the control device (1) is divided into at least one master code (MC) which comprises information essential for operation of the control device (1), and at least one sub-code (SC) which comprises additional information for operation of the control device (1), at least the master code (1) being stored in the microcomputer ( $\mu$ C) and the master code (MC) monitoring the manipulation of the sub-code (SC). The invention furthermore relates to a control device for a motor vehicle component which comprises at least one microcomputer ( $\mu$ C) and at least one memory module (2, 3), the code which is necessary for operation of the control device (1) being divided into at least one master code (MC) which comprises information which is essential for operation of the control device (1), and at least one sub-code (SC) which comprises additional information for operation of the control device (1), and at least the master code (MC) being stored in the microcomputer ( $\mu$ C) and the master code (MC) containing a software function module for detection of manipulation within the sub-code (SC).

(with FIG. 1)